THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) No, Sir. Government have opposed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) on principled grounds. The CTBT opened for signature on 24th September, 1996 in the United Nations at New York. India has made it clear that it would not sign the CTBT.

(b) Does not arise.

Indo-US Relation

1507. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Ms. Robin Raphel, the US Assistant Secretary of State, recently paid a visit to India, following her visits to Pakistan and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, bilateral and international issues discussed with her; and

(c) the outcome of the discussion thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) Yes, Sir. US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, Ms. Robin Raphel visited New Delhi from February 2-4, 1997. She also visited Calcutta on January 24 and Madras on February 1.

(b) and (c) Issues discussed with the Assistant Secretary included trade and investment cooperation between the two countries which has been on the upswing, and the Extradition Treaty which is close to finalization. Both sides affirmed that they would further strengthen cooperation in this field. Views were also exchanged on international developments and developments in the region, including the evolving situation in Afghanistan.

Report on Major Irrigation Projects

1508. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have given a detailed report regarding 19 major irrigation projects in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether out of 19 projects, 17 are pending with the State Government;

(c) the main reasons mentioned by the State Government for not providing the required information to the Union Government on these pending projects;

(d) whether the Union Government have sent reminders to the State Government to forward the replies on technical points raised by the CWC so that CWC can proceed with the fund appraisal; and

(e) if so, the time by which the State Government has agreed to furnish the same?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) to (c) Ministry of Water Resources had invited the attention of Andhra Pradesh regarding status of 19 major irrigation projects in March 1996 followed by a detailed review. Eight projects were found acceptable by the Advisory Committee upto June 1996 subject to obtaining the environmental clearance and compliance of other issues.

The other projects could be considered for clearance as soon as the State Government complies with the observations of the Central Apprising Agencies.

(d) and (e) The status of appraisal of pending projects is periodically reviewed by the officials of Central Water Commission with the officials of State Government. Periodical reminders are also issued.

Indo-US Relationship

1509. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a high level task force has recommended the United States that they should improve the relations with India;

(b) if so, whether the task force has also advised the American Administration that it is necessary to improve relations with India which will help in ensuring peace in South Asia;

(c) if so, whether the recent actions/decisions of US have shown that India and US are considering to improve their relations; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b) An Independent Task Force, in a Report sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, has recommended, *inter alia*, that with the end of the Cold war and the emergence of a new and changing international environment, the US must re-evaluate its policy toward South Asian countries, including India. It observes that a strong India, friendly to the United States, could play a key role in helping maintain stability and economic growth across Asia and could also become a valuable partner for enhanced trade and investment.

(c) and (d) Indo-US relations in the past few years have been marked expansion and diversification. Economic and commercial ties continue to be the centre-piece of the relationship, with the US remaining India's largest trading and investment partner. A new Extradition Treaty between India and the US is close to finalization. Both Governments are in favour of further strengthening cooperation in this field. A new Administration has just assumed office in the US following President Clinton's re-election for a second term. Both Governments are in the process of establishing early high level contacts.

Agitation by Employees of Kendriya Vidyalayas

1510. SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Rashtriya Kendriya Vidyalaya Adhyapak Sangh has threatened to launch an all India agitation by employees of Kendriya Vidyalayas in April, 1997 if their demands are not accepted;

(b) if so, the details of their demands; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Their demands inter-alia include Special Pay Board for Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan employees, redesignation of Post Graduate Teachers as lecturers, accomodation and C.G.H.S. facilities to all teachers, introduction of additional subjects at + 2 level, Trained Graduate Teacher Scale to Music Teachers, modification in the norms for sanction of staff.

These demands are considered by the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan in accordance with relevant rules and procedure.

Asia Europe Meeting

1511. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Mr. John Major, Prime Minister of U.K. while addressing the CII Partnership Summit in Calcutta during January last, gave the assurance that the U.K. will forcefully take up with the countries of Europe and Asia the issue of India's inclusion in the Asia-Europe Summit dialogue in future;

(b) if so, the efforts made by the British Prime Minister in this regard so far;

(c) whether India's hope of becoming member in the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) forum looks uncertain as Asia Europe Meeting officials feel that time is not ripe to admit new members in the 26 country grouping as reported in "The Financial Express", New Delhi dated February 4, 1997; and

(d) if so, the Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b) In his address to the CII Partnership Summit, Prime Minister Major said that Britain has been arguing forcefully with its partners in Europe and Asia for India's inclusion in ASEM and would continue to do so. It is understood that, at the meeting of ASEM Foreign Ministers in Singapore on February 14, the British Foreign Secretary was among those who argued for an expansion of ASEM's membership to include India.

(c) It is understood that no decision was taken at the ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting on expansion of the membership; the question is to be studied further by senior officials.

(d) The position of the Government of India, reiterated more than once to members of ASEM, is that it is illogical to have a meeting between Asia and Europe without the participation of India.

Performance of Coast Guard

1512. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT :
SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether performance of coast guard organisation has been reviewed recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of fresh initiatives taken to upgrade/ strengthen/modernise coast guard organisation to perform the challenging task;

(d) the details of fund required/spent by the organisation during the last three years and the funds approved for ongoing/new projects during the current year;

(e) the details of progress achieved on new projects; and

(f) the reason for delay in clearing the proposals of coast guard organisation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) to (c) The Coast Guard has been performing its statutory functions satisfactorily. However, necessary initiatives are taken from time to time to update, strengthen and modernise the Coast Guard Organisation. The Organisation is also being strengthened by inducting forces as are considered necessary.

(d) Position is as follows :

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Budget Estimates	Expenditure
1993-94	215.00	213.00
1994-95	230.00	229.00
1995-96	252.00	254.00
1996-97	253.97*	not yet available

*including Rs. 150 crores approved for ongoing/new projects.

(e) and (f) One Fast Patrol Vessel (EPV) is scheduled to be commissioned shortly, two more are due for delivery within the next fiscal year. Three Dorniers and three Chetak Helicopters have been commisssioned. Three more Dorniers are expected before 31st March, 1997. For two rescue Helicopters, Letter of Intent has been placed on HAL and these are likely to be delivered during 1998. There is no undue delay in clearing of any Coast Guard proposals.

Ship Building in the Country

1513. SHRI K. PRADHANI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :